



**AUTOMOTIVE
RECYCLERS
ASSOCIATION**
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For Immediate Release:

November 20, 2009
Manassas, Virginia

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**ARA TESTIFIES ON THE NEED OF AMERICANS TO HAVE PROPER
FUNCTIONING AIRBAGS IN THEIR VEHICLES**

Recycled OEM non-deployed airbag modules are safe alternative when installed properly

(Manassas, VA) – The Automotive Recyclers Association (ARA) addressed members of the National Conference of Insurance Legislators (NCOIL) Property and Casualty Committee yesterday at a meeting in New Orleans to discuss model legislation, which is designed to reduce airbag fraud. During his remarks, ARA Executive Vice President Michael E. Wilson pointed to the necessity of Americans to have proper functioning airbags in their motor vehicles. Wilson pointed to a recent review conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of 1,446 fatal accidents from 2001 and 2006 found that in an alarming 255 instances – almost 18 percent – airbags that should have been replaced following deployment in a previous crash were missing.

This data points to a significant issue of ensuring that individuals who complete vehicle collision repairs and insurance total-loss vehicle rebuilds restore critical safety components as part of the repair and rebuilding process. Airbag omission (the practice of repairing vehicles without replacing deployed or missing airbags) is a serious problem with real negative consequences for the safety of American car owners, and this practice must be stopped.

ARA, the leading international trade association of professional automotive recyclers, strongly supports the use of recycled Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) nondeployed airbags which have met specific industry standards and that those *evaluated recycled* OEM nondeployed airbag components are a safe, economically-smart repair alternative to restore vehicles to their pre-accident condition. “The use of these evaluated components is a cost-effective option for a consumer,” said Michael E. Wilson, executive vice president of ARA, “but, more importantly, extensive research and years of experience have proven them as a safe alternative as well.”

Lacking any statistical information, some industry groups continue to push naive arguments regarding the use of recycled airbag modules. These groups continue to rely essentially on personal opinions rather than on any specific technical analysis. A look at comprehensive safety tests on recycled OEM non-deployed airbags conducted by Garwood Laboratories, Inc., Pico River, California (in accordance with Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) Inflator Restraints Standard SAE J1630 and Manufacturers Deployment Standards) reveals that recycled OEM non-deployed airbag use is indeed a solid alternative that protects the American consumer.

Based on this scientific data combined with years of real world experience, the ARA stands by the use of recycled OEM non-deployed airbags as viable, economical, and safe alternatives to the use of new, more costly OEM airbags. In fact, recycled OEM non-deployed airbag modules are currently being used in insurance collision repairs in parts of Canada. Both the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) and Saskatchewan General Insurance (SGI) have been successfully using recycled OEM non-deployed airbags in repairs for many years. The test conducted by ICBC compared recycled OEM non-deployed airbags and new airbags. The mix consisted of recycled OEM non-deployed airbags from domestic and Japanese manufacturers. New Ford, General Motors, Chrysler and Honda airbags of the same application as recycled OEM non-deployed airbags were purchased from local dealerships for comparison to the recycled ones. As a result of the testing, effective April 2001, ICBC and body shops began utilizing recycled OEM non-deployed airbags supplied by ICBC/ARA “Certified” Automotive Recyclers.

As a proactive measure to ensure safety standards are met, ARA launched ARAPro™ in 2006. The ARA's Airbag Protocol (www.airbagresources.com) was developed as a national standard to ensure best practices are applied to the process of extracting, handling, inspecting, and storing recycled OEM non-deployed airbags from salvaged vehicles. Using the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) as well as other interchange reference sources, ARAPro™ enables the repairer to accurately match the make, model, and year of the replacement component to the vehicle under repair.

ARAPro™ Airbags, the brand name that applies to recycled OEM non-deployed airbags complying with the Airbag Protocol, are supplied with a certificate that can ultimately be used by a state DMV's to verify that a Protocol compliant OEM non-deployed airbag has been used in the repair. Returning vehicles to the roads without airbags is a serious problem, as the NHTSA study underlines. ARAPro™ Airbags are an integral part of the solution to stop potential and unnecessary tragedy on the roads.

Since 1943, the Automotive Recyclers Association ("ARA") represents an industry dedicated to the efficient removal and reuse of "green" automotive parts, and the recycling of inoperable motor vehicles. ARA represents over 4,500 automotive recycling facilities through memberships in the United States and fourteen other countries around the world. With programs such as the Certified Automotive Recycler Program (CAR) and other partnerships, ARA members continue to provide consumers with quality, low cost alternatives for vehicle replacement parts, while preserving our environment for a "greener" tomorrow.

To learn more about the Association, visit ARA's Home Page at www.a-r-a.org or call (703) 385-1001.